United Nations S/2003/511

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 April 2003

Original: English

Letter dated 29 April 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to transmit herewith the report on the international security presence in Kosovo for the period from 1 to 31 March 2003 (see annex).

I should be grateful if this letter could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Annex

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-31 March 2003) there were just over 26,000 troops of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in theatre.

Security

2. The overall security situation in Kosovo during the month of March was generally stable.

3. On 2 March, there was a grenade attack on an UNMIK police station in northern Mitrovica. The building and three vehicles were damaged. The incident is believed to be criminally motivated. On 21 March, there were two separate grenade attacks within a few hours of each other on UNMIK police stations in Pristina. There were no casualties. KFOR detained three men following the second incident; the investigation is continuing.

4. On 21 March KFOR detained Xhavit Morina, a former NLA leader and self-styled Albanian National Army (AKSh) commander, suspected of operating in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.[1] On 28 March, KFOR detained the vice-president of the Kosovo Society of War Veterans and former KLA commander Fatmir Mahmeti, who had been listed as a threat to security.

5. KFOR forces continued to conduct intelligence-based surveillance operations and patrolling throughout the province to stop illegal activities and weapons smuggling, and to minimize the risk of terrorist activity.

6. During the period under review, KFOR collected a significant amount of weapons and ammunition. Items confiscated during the month included 150 assorted weapons; 198 grenades and mines; and 102,290 rounds of ammunition. Of the total number of rounds of ammunition found, about 97,500 rounds were discovered on 19 March, the largest amount of ammunition seized during one operation since 1999. The incident occurred on the Beli Drim River, near the border crossing point of Morina South, when seven crates of ammunition were found on board two boats on their way to Kosovo. The persons responsible have not been found.

Border/boundary security

7. KFOR continued to monitor border and boundary security, and reported that the number of persons attempting to cross borders illegally decreased during the reporting period.

Cooperation and compliance by the parties

8. The security forces of Serbia and Montenegro continued to remain in compliance with the terms and conditions of the Military Technical Agreement.

9. During March, 11 roll-calls of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) were called at short notice across the province. The rate of absenteeism with permission is still high even though UNMIK has already issued a policy directive stating that the

[1] Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name.

minimum availability of KPC personnel required a 75 per cent presence at all times. The need to have a terms of service contract drawn up for KPC personnel has been agreed, and a second draft is being reviewed by UNMIK and the Joint Implementation Commission.

10. Twenty cases of non-compliance were reported during the month; they include 13 cases of absenteeism, the others relating to assault, insubordination and misuse of position. Seventy-nine cases remain open.

11. On 24 March, a former high-ranking KPC officer, Sali Veselj, was sentenced by Prizren District Court to 10 years' imprisonment for incitement to murder in the killing in May 2000 of Ekrem Redza, a former KLA leader. The trial of Veselj and four others was the longest post-war prosecution in Kosovo, and resulted in the conviction of Veselj, a sentence of two-and-a-half years for Halil Caradaku as an accessory to murder, and the acquittal of the other three men.

Cooperation with international organizations

12. KFOR continued to provide assistance, on request, to international and non-governmental organizations working throughout Kosovo, and to provide security assistance in support of UNMIK police operations.

13. On 25 March, the newly formed Civil Protection Development Group held its inaugural meeting. The Civil Protection Development Group was established to engage the international community and KPC as partners in the development of KPC in accordance with its current mandate. The Group is co-chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the Commander of KFOR. Its members include several high-level representatives of the international community, including heads of liaison offices in Kosovo, and the UNMIK KPC Coordinator. The KPC Commander and his deputy represent KPC.

Outlook

14. The overall security situation in Kosovo continues to improve steadily. While isolated acts of violence and instances of KPC non-compliance continue, there is not believed to be a significant threat to the safe and secure environment of the province.